

SECRET/KAPOK

Chief of Station, Mexico City

X

WH Division (Chief)

Review of LIFEAT and LIENVOY Projects by KUTUBE/OPS

1. Here is the KUTUBE draft paper prepared by Paul V. LEVISTER after his recent visit to your station. It has had the benefit of valuable suggestions from the desk. It has been read with interest by senior KUBARK officers who think the paper illustrates the essentials of good tap operations. The stress of the paper is on intelligence collection, but some mention had to be made of operational leads and CI/CS information, otherwise we would have had only a partial picture of the operations. We will appreciate any comments or corrections you wish to make. We want to present the true facts and convey the right impression.

2. Having paid this tribute to honesty, we will admit having departed from the facts in a few instances, in the interest of simplification. One was the question of reels and transcripts, and reels alone (pages 17, 32 and 42); we did not wish to confuse the reader with this distinction. The other was the collection and distribution of reels and translations, which is somewhat more complex than the procedure described in the text; we preferred not to risk losing the reader and ourselves in those double and triple wingback formations executed by Robert B. RIGGS and Jeremy R. NIARCOS on their way to work in the morning and sometimes during the day.

3. There are a few points on which we were not sure, for instance the summary account of the station's strength given on pages 46-47. We felt that such an account was necessary once the reader had an idea of the size of the operations and the amount of work involved; without such an account he might have assumed that the station in question was one of our very largest. There is also the question of the exact composition of the intercept center—at the start, and now. If there is anything missing (or not accurately described) that would help other stations to improve their own operations at this key point, we would like very much to put it in.

(continued)

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4. Finally, there was the question of the Polish lines, on which the files are mystifying. The 1960 Project Renewal request mentions LITENSOR's desire to cover those as well as the other two, but subsequent correspondence omits all mention of Polish lines. Did he really mention the Polish target? If so, how did we manage to get out of it?

5. The tough problem, of course, will be to sanitize the paper without downgrading the operations. The essence of the message is that so much can be done, and done well, by relatively few people, provided these few people have the right skills and sufficient drive. We might omit all references to Latin America, the Spanish language, and Cuban case officers; we might even throw in a few misleading phrases like "the far-away Cuban target." We certainly would not want the location to be recognized except by persons already familiar with the operations. We will be guided by your wishes in this and other aspects of the paper.

Oliver G. GALBOND

VPV

ZRSOLO AND ZRJOINT

TWO TELEPHONE TAP OPERATIONS



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION: TWO COMPLEMENTARY OPERATIONS	1
PART I: DEVELOPMENT OF THE TWO OPERATIONS	3
PART II: THE OUTSIDE INSTALLATIONS	16
PART III: STATION'S USE OF TAP INFORMATION	32
CONCLUSIONS	49



# INTRODUCTION: TWO COMPLEMENTARY OPERATIONS

The station does not share the widespread belief that telephone taps are necessarily poor producers of positive intelligence. Whenever a station officer hears of a tap operation that produces little disseminable information, his inevitable comment is: "Too bad they're letting good information slip through their fingers." The station's experience with two tap operations explains its attitude. For <sup>24</sup>(13) years it has had an <sup>24</sup>(independent) tap operation that became a good producer of positive intelligence as well as operational leads and CI/CE information. During its period of maximum development this operation had 23 lines and produced some 140 disseminations per year. Five years ago the station set up a new tap operation (jointly with the local government). This operation became oriented primarily towards <sup>24</sup>intelligence production. During the past two years it has maintained 30 active lines and produced some 265 disseminations per year; its reporting has been evaluated as "detailed, and of high quality and substantial quantity." Several lines tapped by the <sup>24</sup>(joint operation) had been the most productive ones of the <sup>24</sup>(independent) taps. The <sup>24</sup>(independent) operation has been maintained, without the knowledge of the local government, but it has become oriented primarily towards targets of CI/CE interest; at the same time, its overall coverage has been reduced, and in recent years it has maintained between 12 and 18 lines. Under these circumstances, the intelligence production of <sup>24</sup>(the independent) operation was bound to decrease; nevertheless, it has remained a respectable producer, with an average <sup>24</sup>of 5<sup>24</sup> disseminations per year. The story of these two complementary

tap operations suggests that such operations can be directed primarily towards intelligence collection or towards the acquisition of CI/CE information and operational leads; it also shows that any good tap operation is bound to produce both positive and CI/CE information, in varying degrees according to the way the operation is slanted. The intelligence product is there, but it has to be recognized and extracted from the ore. The following account of the development and present workings of the station's two tap operations will bring out the principal factors that contribute to their productivity.



## PART I. DEVELOPMENT OF THE TWO OPERATIONS

The basis for the <sup>24</sup>(independent) operation, which we will call ZRSOLO, was laid in the fall of <sup>09</sup>(1950) when two employees of the <sup>06</sup>(tele-  
phone company) were recruited; one was a supervisor (for repairs and <sup>06</sup>maintenance) and the other was one of his subordinates, (a lineman who <sup>06</sup>did repair and maintenance work). In <sup>09</sup>(1951) taps were placed on outside lines of the Soviet embassy and the Czech and Polish legations. By the middle of <sup>09</sup>(1955) the operation's coverage had been extended to <sup>09</sup>leaders of the local Communist Party and Communist-front organizations. These early years had been a difficult period of apprenticeship, for the station as well as for KUBARK as a whole, in overcoming the problems of telephone taps, and especially that of handling the raw take. But progress had been steady, and the productive years were just ahead. In <sup>09</sup>(1955) ZRSOLO produced 19 positive and 6 CE disseminations; the Orbit country desks judged the operational information of this tap operation to be the best we had anywhere. In <sup>09</sup>(1956) it produced 36 positive and 74 <sup>09</sup>disseminations. And in <sup>09</sup>(1957) it produced 141 positive intelligence disseminations. Its coverage had been expanded to include <sup>24</sup>(local government installations) and PSBRIDGE Communist expatriates, the latter at the request of ODENVY, whose Chief commended KUBARK for the excellent information transmitted to his organization. The station was also praised by Headquarters for its timely follow-up of operational leads. The target lines now numbered 23. There were seven listening



posts located near the intercept points, with a listening post operator and an assistant in each one to do the monitoring. The Soviet and Satellite take was translated by contract agents. The station had plans to add four or five more lines, but expansion came in the form of a new operation.

24

In the fall of 1958 top officials of the local government approached the Chief of Station for assistance in setting up and running a telephone-tap operation against targets of interest to (them and) KUBARK. These officials, however, did not want to work through their own security service; on the contrary, they distrusted the service and acted without its knowledge, and in fact, one of the target lines from the very beginning has been that of the chief of service. Here was an opportunity, not only to expand the station's telephone coverage (with local help) but also to develop (relationships) beneficial to KUBARK and ODYSS (high up in the government). The first taps were installed in (1959) within the main central of the telephone company by arrangement of the (local government officials) with a witting (company executive). (The company central) was linked with an intercept center by underground cable. The native staff of the intercept center consisted of one (civilian) in charge, a watchman janitor, and (eight junior Army officers) who did the monitoring and transcribing. A station staff agent dealt with the (civilian) in charge as KUBARK's representative.



After one year of operation the Chief of Station reported that "this initial year of the life of ERJOINT"--as we will call the new operation--"witnessed an endless series of major and minor difficulties." The station had had to get another <sup>24</sup> (joint) operation under way at the same time; a surveillance team had been formed to follow up leads obtained from the taps, and it was not performing very well. The staff agent who was in direct contact with the intercept center had been replaced after six months by another staff agent newly assigned from Headquarters, but this second man had to be withdrawn from the station four months later because of cover problems. Under these circumstances, the station's on-the-job training program for the native monitors was not as effective as had been expected. "The major problem," reported the Chief of Station, "lies in the complete reliance placed upon KIBARA by the untrained native staff for professional and technical direction of the project, and while the intercept and transcription of the tape is being smoothly and efficiently performed, the native staff has been unable so far, with sporadic exceptions, to accompany those results with the all-important analysis for intelligence information, collation for compilation of meaningful comprehensive reports, and keener targeting." There we have it, the all-important element that makes the difference between a productive operation and one that merely runs smoothly but doesn't do anything for us. It was not easy to impart the station's hard-earned knowledge, acquired from its experience with ZRSOLO, to the raw recruits of ERJOINT, but the difficulties of the first year were over and success was in the offing. (all information)



A few months later another staff agent arrived at the station to work on the operation. He had both operational experience and good technical background. The year before he had helped install the ZR-JOLFF equipment and was well liked by the local people he had come in contact with. He was assigned to work full-time with the native staff at the intercept center, and his job, in addition to maintaining the equipment, ~~was to analyze and exploit the intercept information for~~ ~~which exploitation in South Vietnam requires a few further collection~~ ~~of information, to organize and refine the records keeping of the~~ ~~center, and generally to train the native staff towards proper exploitation of the intercept.~~ *from the monitors* During ZR-JOLFF's second year the Chief of Station had reason to be satisfied with its production and with the work of the monitors: the operation produced 165 positive intelligence disseminations. And during its third and fourth years it produced 275 and 255 disseminations.

ZRJINT is a better intelligence producer than ZRSOLO ever was, and better perhaps than it ever could be. Many of our <sup>24</sup> (joint) tap operations have been easier to get started but more difficult to keep on their agreed course than <sup>24</sup> (independent) operations. However, when <sup>24</sup> (joint) operations are based on a genuine community of interest, as this one is, the participation of <sup>24</sup> (the local authorities) makes every task easier. (The local sponsors) of ZRJINT have demonstrated all along their community of interest with KUBARK by their proposal of target lines, which in many instances coincided with the station's own targeting <sup>24</sup> (of its independent) operations. The first taps installed in the spring of (1959) were against local Communist and Communist-front targets, most of which had been targets of ZRSOLO. In June <sup>24</sup> (1960) the operation was expanded, on the initiative of <sup>24</sup> (the local officials) to lines of the Soviet embassy and the Czech legation. Additional lines were subsequently added, whenever the intercept center was judged capable of handling more traffic. At the present time, there are 30 lines in operation: five are on Soviet targets, three are on the Yugoslav legation, two are on the Czech legation, five are on Cuban targets, fourteen are on local Communist or Communist-front targets, and there is still <sup>24</sup> (one tap on the office of the chief of the local security service). ~~Subject to mutual agreement, any of these lines can be changed instantly to other targets.~~ The Chief of Station had stipulated at the very start that the taps should be used against

opponents of the local regime and the Free World; they were not to be used in furthering personal political interests by uncovering damaging information on the private lives of loyal political opponents. There has never been a disagreement between KUBARK and the local sponsors of the operation concerning the choice of target lines.



There is another aspect of our relationship with the local government in this operation that is a factor in its success. The local sponsors had been receiving reports derived from a telephone-tap operation run by the local security service, and they knew that this was not the product they wanted. Conversations were not recorded, and there could be no check on the live monitoring; in the hands of an inefficient and corrupt service, there was every chance that the substance of conversations was colored and distorted, unintentionally or by design. That is why these local officials asked the Chief of Station to help them set up and maintain a good intercept center, and kept the local service out of it. In this joint operation we do not deal with a local service--with service objectives, with personal ambitions, with a modus operandi and a modus non operandi, that ran counter to KHEARK and ODYCKE objectives. We were spared the tug of war that sometimes occurs when the tap installation is in good working order and the local service decides to take it over for itself. We do not deal with a so-called special unit within a service, the kind of unit that often presents the same liaison problems as the service itself. We deal with a truly special unit: as far as we know, the only local people who are aware of the existence of the intercept center today are the present staff and two past members, a few witting persons in the telephone company, the Army Chief of Staff, and the top officials in the government who proposed the operation. Today these officials

have reason to think that they did the right thing in by-passing their own service: they share an operation that gives them, little by little and day by day, an insight into the intentions and plans of persons and groups hostile to them and to ODYCEK. Every morning the President of the country and the Chief of Station have on their desks a two to four-page copy of the highlights of the previous day's taps. Occasionally the President asks for a check of the tapes to see if there are other details to be had from a conversation of special interest to him. He has stated on one occasion, when a Communist-inspired congress was held in his country, that he had never been so well informed on any similar event. The Chief of Station daily marks his own copy of the previous day's highlights with brief instructions to reports and case officers on points of special importance or on which he has special knowledge. This interest at the top, on both sides, gives added spark to the interest of all the others who are engaged in the operation.

In joint operations the preservation of KUBARK interests is not only a matter of original agreement but also, and sometimes more so, one of daily concern in the actual running of those operations. KUBARK's interests in ZRJOINT have been well protected all along.

Our case officer inside the installation, the staff agent who keeps the equipment in good working condition, makes sure that the operation stays on course. Apparently the local civilian in charge of the monitoring staff tried to find out at one time whether our man could be elbowed out; he told him that he was being surveilled and should stay away from the intercept center for a few weeks, but the case officer replied that he could not do ~~that~~<sup>so</sup> except on orders from the Chief of Station, and that was the end of the matter. The station performed the rare feat of cutting the native fat out of the operation; a surveillance and investigative unit had been created, when the first taps were installed, to follow up leads generated by the operation, but like other similar units manned by natives and subsidized by KUBARK it did not function, and it was terminated after one year. The station even succeeded in setting up a special preserve of its own within the joint operation. When the local officials asked for coverage of the Soviet and Czech installations, the Chief of Station expressed interest but pointed out that he had no linguists capable of translating Russian and Czech; it was agreed that the Russian and Czech tapes would be sent to Headquarters for translation and that any items of interest could be passed back to the station, which would transmit them to our



local partners. The Russian and Czech tapes of ZRJOEVI, of course, have been translated by the same persons who had translated those of ZRJOLO. This gives the station about two weeks during which it can exploit operational leads by itself, with its own surveillance and investigative means. If the station wishes to pass a certain item to the local officials for possible action on their part, it can do so after four or five days by citing a Headquarters cable containing the substance of the intercept. If a certain case or event requires immediate transmission of the translated tape to the local government for an indefinite period, the explanation given is that a Headquarters linguist has been sent on TDY to the station for that purpose. By this arrangement the station has kept control of the follow-up of operational leads derived from the Soviet Orbit lines, and with our local partners limited to the monitoring staff and a few high government officials, there is no danger that our follow-up actions will run into similar local actions. This arrangement would also make it easier to resume coverage of those lines by the independent operation if ZRJOEVI should be terminated.

The establishment of the joint tap installation did not have the harmful effect on ZPSOLO that <sup>some feared</sup> had been feared. By assuming coverage of the Soviet and Czech official installations and of some local Communist and Communist-front targets, ZPSOLO removed that much of the load from ZPSOLO. The independent operation was then directed more intensively towards targets and operations which the station did not want to share with the local government. Taps were placed on the home lines of Soviet and Czech intelligence officers; one tap was placed on the home line of a suspected Soviet agent; and some taps were placed, primarily in support of KIWOLF operations, on the phones of Latin-American exiles who are plotting against the pro-CYKOR governments of their countries. And of course, the taps against PSPRIZ Communist expatriates have quite properly remained with the independent operation. ZPSOLO's total coverage has been reduced--there are 16 active lines at the present time--but there are occasional increases due to the short-term coverage of targets of opportunity, or decreases due to the temporary suspension of some lines because of security hazards. The reduced operation, however, still maintains seven listening posts and is capable of resuming its peak load of 23 lines at any time. The net result of the joint venture, therefore, has been to double the station's telephone-tap coverage.

and to permit an efficient and productive division of labor between the two operations, all without damage to ZRSCIO and to its future prospects. And the joint operation did not place a large support burden upon the station, mainly because of the outstanding work of the native monitoring staff at the intercept center. This work will be described in the course of the following description of the intercept installations of ZRSCIO and ZRSCIO.

## PART II. THE OUTSIDE INSTALLATIONS

"You can't expect much from the people of this country; they're careless, indolent, . . . " and so on. Such generalizations have been made by KUBARK officers concerning the people of many countries, including the one where ZRJOINT is located. The station would probably not agree with the generalization, and certainly it would not apply it to the native monitoring staff. All station officers connected with the operation pay tribute to the remarkable skill developed by the monitors and to the high quality of their work. Their most valuable skill is their ability to remove most of the trivia from the take at the very source, in replays of the tapes, without losing much if anything of the valuable substance. The major intelligence product of the intercept center is a daily report of the highlights of the take. The average length of this report is about three pages of single-spaced typing. Significant conversations appear in chronological order, with the time indicated in the margin. They are condensed, but the key phrases are given literally, between quotation marks. The most productive lines for this report are those on Spanish-speaking targets, but there are occasional items from Orbit lines when conversations are held in Spanish. The tapes of Spanish-speaking lines except the Cuban are kept at the intercept center a week or two, for possible checking of certain conversations, and then erased; the highlights report, therefore, is the only product received daily by the station from those lines. The take from the



Soviet, Czech, Yugoslav, and Cuban lines is handled in the following manner. The Spanish portions are transcribed and calibrated to the reels; notations are made in the transcripts at points where conversations are in Russian ("En ruso"), Czech, or Serbian; and the reels and transcripts are transmitted every morning to the station case officer responsible for ZRNGISF. Even in these transcripts the monitors omit trivial conversations when they are in Spanish, merely noting "Sin importancia". The practice of having the monitors remove all the trivia they can recognize as such is essential to making the rest of the tape manageable and therefore usable. We may lose an occasional item or detail of value in this way, but we would lose much more if the flow of information got out of control, if backlogs of unread tapes accumulated and the product <sup>were</sup> left to rot away.

The considerable discretion exercised by the monitors in sorting out the take was not granted them at the start or at any one time; they acquired it gradually as their increasing competence showed that they were ready for more. They received practical on-the-job training from KUBARK, and this training was especially effective after the first year, when the case officer/technician was assigned full-time to the intercept center. In the last few years they have needed little instruction as such, being sufficiently guided by station queries on details of conversations, or indications of station interest in new telephone correspondents who showed up in the traffic. Our case officer at the center was greatly aided in his task of whipping the staff into shape by the superior aptitude of one monitor--one was bound to be the best of the lot--who showed a remarkable ability for isolating intelligence from the mass of the take. It is he who prepares the daily highlights report. He has become the chief monitor and office manager of the intercept center, directly subordinate to the civilian in charge. His knowledge of English makes him all the more valuable to us, because we depend largely on him to keep the other monitors alert to our interests and primed for their jobs. The monitors have become so sensitive to our needs that in the last few years there have been fewer and fewer occasions when it was necessary to check their renderings against the reels, and almost all the positive intelligence

derived from the operation has been taken from their daily highlights reports. They can even detect significant operational leads, which they immediately bring to the attention of the case officer at the center, and he in turn calls the station.

In the course of time the monitors have acquired the special skills of professional eavesdroppers. They know the voices of the target persons and of their frequent correspondents. They identify in their reports the particular Latin-American accents of unknown callers. They grasp the different meanings of intonations and can visualize situations at the other end of the line. They record special moods of speakers, such as anger or anxiety, in parenthetical notes. They have a simple system of initials to present clearly the conversations of unidentified speakers--unknown callers or unidentified persons in large installations: MI (man inside installation), MO (man outside), WI (woman inside), and WO (woman outside). They maintain a simple but effective system of cross-filing excerpts of the take by names of target persons, by names of their principal contacts, and by telephone numbers called by target persons, in addition to the basic chronological file of the take for each target line. This handy reference system enables the monitors to identify people and supply their full names, as well as to judge the probable value of conversations in the light of past conversations between correspondents; it also obviates the need for the station to do this cross-filing job. The highlights reports and the transcripts are evidence, by their appearance, of the monitors' pride in their work. The presentation is orderly and follows a certain format, which makes the reports

70



easier to use; the typing is neat and erasures are very rare; the text seldom contains mistakes, and then they are minor--all this despite the pressure of daily deadlines. And from young Army officers! Such meticulousness is not what makes them good monitors, but it is a symptom of the general care with which they discharge their essential functions. It took between one and two years to bring the monitoring staff to its present level of competence, and continuity on the job has been an important factor in the result. In five years only one of the original monitors has left; he was replaced and an extra monitor was added, but it took some six months, and good coaching from the others, for each of these two recruits to begin to match the performance of the charter members. The Chief of Station had, at the very start, impressed upon the local sponsors of the operation the need to have good monitors and to keep them on the job. One incentive was devised in the form of pay; the young officers receive their regular Army pay and in addition ADEARK subsidizes for each one a supplementary salary proportionate to the value of his work at the center. But another incentive that seems equally important is the satisfaction that the young officers apparently derive from their work, now that they have become experts at it. They are constantly being reminded of the importance of their jobs by the interest that the local government officials and the station show in the product of their work. Because of the outstanding work of these monitors and the excellent working relationship they have with our case officer at the center, the arrangement made with the local government officials is as valid today as it was at the start:

It was so, because it is now firmly rooted in the day-to-day operation of several years.

An indispensable man at the intercept center, as far as KIBARK is concerned, is the staff agent who looks out after our interests and keeps the equipment in good working order. Maintaining our interests is a job that requires tact as well as firmness. Our man transmits station questions and comments through the civilian in charge of the chief monitor, in order to avoid the implication that the native staff is subject to his orders. His workday begins at 7:30 in the morning, when he picks up the previous day's highlights report, reels and transcripts, and hands them over to his station contact. Sometimes his day ends at 10 o'clock in the evening, the cutoff time for the monitoring of the lines, when the last items for the day are entered in the highlights report and the transcripts. The monitoring staff works on two overlapping shifts, 0800 to 1500 hours, and 1500 to 2300 hours; our man is in and out of the center throughout the day, checking and repairing equipment inside, or conferring with station officers outside. Now that the monitoring staff has become so competent, his principal single task by far is taking care of the monitoring equipment. The local sponsors of the operation could certainly find a technician of their own who could repair broken-down equipment, but they would have difficulty finding one willing to check each unit thoroughly once a month in order to prevent breakdowns. The equipment consists of 32 units, and 30 of them are in operation every day, one on each target line. Each

unit is composed of a E-10 dial recorder and an Ampex 601 tape recorder. The 32 units are mounted, two units side by side, on 16 racks 84 inches high and 19 inches wide. Our man tries to do the two units of one rack each day that the workload seems to permit, checking all the parts, replacing wear tubes, and cleaning both units from top to bottom, a job that takes about three hours; he generally manages to do the 16 racks each month. In addition, he dusts and vacuums the exposed parts of the units once a week. The equipment has been used seven days a week for five years and although it is worn and will be replaced within the next year, it still gives good reception. There has never been a problem of poor reception in the course of this operation.



The case officer has the cover of a technical adviser on electrification. He is the only PEPRIME citizen who goes to the intercept center regularly. The Chief of Station occasionally drops in for a discreet look-see, as a reminder of MURARE's interest and equity in the operation. At one time a Headquarters officer, a former station member who knew his way around, did some live monitoring at the center in support of an operation of great urgency. Except in these two cases of operational necessity, access to the premises has been denied. The station has not used the center as a showpiece to impress visiting firemen. The station's prudent attitude seems to have influenced the native people at the intercept center to keep their knowledge to themselves. The fact that translators were not placed alongside the monitors, for the sake of convenience, may also have helped; the comings and goings of foreign-looking persons would probably have aroused curiosity in the neighborhood, and their doings within the center would have tempted the monitors to talk about them at home and with their friends. There have been no security incidents, but the least indications of danger have been taken into account. The intercept center was moved after its first year of operation because it was located near the office of one of the local sponsors of the operation. Some time ago two men were observed watching the present site from across the street. Plans were made immediately for another move, but by the time a new site was found, the prospect of national elections put the

future status of the operation in doubt, and the station is awaiting the outcome before deciding what step to take. As far as the target persons are concerned, they probably suspect that they are being overheard, on general principles, but their suspicions are probably directed at the local service, which has been running a far more extensive tap operation--and a crude, insecure one it is--for many years. In case of grave emergency, the chief of the native monitors could ward off exposure by the police or security service; he has credentials which state that he works on behalf of the President.

The partnership of the local government in an operation removes one of the most serious consequences of exposure, that is, the apprehension of KUBARK employees or agents in the act of breaking the law; in a joint operation we have the law on our side. The security problem is quite different with independent operations like ZRSTIN, in which we are on our own and whose taps on outside lines are exposed to detection. The extra wires can be traced to the listening post by telephone company linemen, and when the taps happen to be close to the target installation, they can be detected by visiting technicians on inspection tours. Security alerts often cause the station to remove the taps and to reinstall them weeks or months later when it appears safe to do so. There are several ways in which the station may be alerted to danger. The company supervisor recruited at the start of the operation is sometimes able to provide advance notice of company work to be done near the intercept points on the lines. In addition, there is a standing procedure whereby the operators of the various listening posts stroll by their target areas every day to see if there are any telephone company men working on or near the hot lines. The visits of technicians for security checks of target installations may be announced in advance by Headquarters or reported at the time of arrival by the station's sources of travel information.



Despite all these precautions, of course, close calls do happen. In May 1956 the station went through several uneasy days when it learned that Soviet technicians had already arrived for a check of Soviet offices and homes. The taps were left on for fear that any change in voltage would be noticed by the technicians, but after a violent storm had disrupted much of the city's telephone service, they were removed; they were put on again after the departure of the technicians. The intrusions of telephone company men on spare lines are a more frequent hazard. In January 1958 a telephone lineman discovered one of the two taps on the Czech legation. All taps on all targets were deactivated immediately. After the station's inside agent, the supervisor for maintenance and repairs, was able to give assurance three months later that there would be no company investigation, the taps were reinstalled one by one and by the end of the summer the operation was full-blown once again. In July 1959 the taps on the Czech lines were removed once again when the station learned that the telephone company was about to do extensive cable renovation work near the listening post for that target; the taps were replaced in January after the renovation work was completed.

At the present time the telephone company is engaged in a modernization program, part of which consists in replacing the old overhead telephone wires with new underground cables; concurrently the Secretariat of Communications and Public Works is trying to find ways of providing telephone service to new customers, and to this end it is looking into the question of recovering dead pairs of wires left in place over the years when the lines of former users were deactivated. In the last few years a few ZRSQID taps were placed in telephone centrals; This method will be our only choice in parts of the city serviced by underground cables, and it will probably be our best choice where overhead lines are cleaned and kept clean of superfluous wire. Even then, the general tidying-up will leave the lines running to the listening posts more exposed than before. All these security problems, past and present, have been reported candidly and in detail by the station. KUESK remarked at the last review of ZRSQID that "the station is to be congratulated for its fine job of coping with these problems as they come up and for keeping this operation as productive and secure as it is."

The operators of the listening posts have been trained to meet various situations that could result in exposure. Not long ago two company people came to a listening post that had one tap running into it; they wanted to check the telephone lines on the roof. The operator of the post, a dignified lady with an air of authority, told the men to come back the next morning; her husband was away and she could not let men into the house in his absence. The company men came back the next morning. The husband was sleeping, had come home late the night before--the lady was not married, incidentally--but they could come in . . . and don't make any noise . . . wipe your boots . . . don't knock over this old vase . . . She gave them a hard time throughout; they got to the roof, saw pieces of wire with the ends oxidized, which the lady ordered them to remove from the premises, and they quickly left the house, probably glad that it was all over. The tap was put on again, but the listening post was moved to another house. Of course, no amount of ingenuity will help if the listening post looks suspect in the first place.

The lady just mentioned lives with her sister, the wife of a prominent local figure. Three listening posts are in the homes of well-to-do people, with small children around the house; the mother is the operator, and in one case grandma acts as alternate.

Another listening post is in the apartment of an old couple whose advanced age probably puts them above suspicion; their advanced



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age is beginning to worry the station, but their son and daughter-in-law are being cleared and are due to move in with them and gradually take over. The listening post is in the home of the company supervisor who has supported ZASLO from the start; his job includes the detection of lines grafted on the company network by poachers who want free telephone service, and he has always had extra lines running into his home for this investigative purpose. The seventh listening post is in an apartment building, and it needs no cover because it has concealment; the lines were run through the masonry along the floors and walls when the building was going up, and extra pairs were run off in different directions here and there for deception; one would have to tear down much of the building to find out where the tap wires lead to. The dispersion of the operation's seven listening posts contributes to its secrecy; the exposure of one listening post would not necessarily endanger the others. Furthermore, its dispersion almost insured its compartmentation, and the operators of a listening post know only about a small part of the operation, except in a few cases where the operator of one post is aware of the existence of another because he or she translates its product.

Despite its physical dispersion, ZRSOLO has been run tightly and smoothly over the years. The most obvious factor is the acquired competence of some key persons and their continuity on the job. The telephone company supervisor and the lineman recruited in 1950, and a second lineman recruited in 1953, still support the operation today. A contract agent who began operating one of the listening posts in 1953 became the principal outside case officer for the whole operation in 1957, a position he still holds; he has a shop at home where he repairs and tunes up the equipment, but he has trained most of the listening-post operators to do minor repairs; in addition, he speaks Spanish and Polish and can substitute for regular monitors and translators. The Czech translator has been on the job since the installation of the first Czech line in 1951. Two contract agents who operate listening posts and do translations have been with the operation since 1954. Then there are the 21 field agents connected with the operation at the present time; they were hired between 1951 and 1962, and their average time on the job is almost seven years. The productivity of a telephone-tap operation depends in large part on our ability to keep in place those persons who have developed the required skills and a certain feel for their jobs. This point was made in connection with the monitors at the intercept center, but it applies even more to the dispersed participants of an operation like ZRSOLO, who cannot be placed under one roof and learn the business one from another. Fortunately, there is plenty of longevity in ZRSOLO.

### PART III. STATION'S USE OF TAP INFORMATION

Examining the product of the two tap operations is the first order of the day at the station, but several station officers have some early work to do in order to make it available when the station opens for business. The case officer assigned to the intercept center picks up the center's product of the previous day--the highlights report, and the tapes of the Cuban, Soviet, Czech, and Yugoslav lines, with transcripts of the Spanish portions; these tapes are separately packaged for easy distribution to the translators. The outside case officer turns the whole lot over, in a car pickup, to the case officer in the station proper who is responsible for ZRJOINT. This case officer, in turn, exchanges the tapes to be translated, in two successive car pickups, for the tapes passed the previous day and their translations. At the same time, the station case officer responsible for ZR3010 picks up <sup>from</sup> this operation's principal outside case officer and his assistant the product of the seven listening posts, that is, the previous day's take from the Spanish-language lines, and the translated take of the day before that for the Soviet, Polish, and Czech lines. This is the general procedure for collecting and distributing the raw take from the two operations, but variations are likely to be required from time to time. Some of the translators are multi-lingual, and although their regular work is generally limited to translations from a single language, they sometimes have to work on <sup>these</sup> in another language because the regular translator



is ill or away. The station case officers have no difficulty adapting their morning runs to the needs of the day because of the constant practice they and their outside contacts have had in meeting each other on the go. When the workday begins, all the pieces are in place; the highlights report, the transcripts, and the translations are in the station, and the reels to be translated are in the hands of the translators. This early-morning job of collection and distribution is only a first step, but an important one, in the station's continuous effort to transmit promptly the intelligence product of the taps and to make timely use of operational leads.

The station's speed in preparing information reports for transmission to Headquarters is made possible, in the first place, by the quality of the highlights report prepared by the monitors at the intercept center. Most of our disseminable information appears in this daily report. Extra copies of it are made each morning for simultaneous distribution to the Chief of Station and the two reports officers; the transcripts and translations are distributed to operations officers according to their specialties. Thus, work on the early-morning harvest goes on in different parts of the station at the same time. The reports officers first go over the highlights report for cabled information reports to Headquarters. After that they examine the Cuban transcripts for additional details or items. Any disseminable information that appears in the transcripts or translations of Soviet, Czech, Polish, and Yugoslav lines is brought to their attention by the operations officers. And at any time, they may receive a note or a personal visit from the Chief of Station, calling their attention to an item of special importance or urgency. The major preoccupation is the immediate transmission of reportable information, so that its value will not be lost or lessened by handling delays. The reports officers state that more valuable information could be extracted if one more qualified

But there are accumulated bits and pieces of information that are too fragmentary for immediate reporting and are set aside for the time being; they can be combined with more substantial information later on. Many disseminated reports are made up of several conversations heard on the same or successive days; they may also be based on the product of different lines when several target persons, such as the principal leaders of a Communist-front organization, are busy planning their next move. To recognize the significance of each fragment of information, and to put the various fragments together, not as they are heard over the lines--aside from the fact that they must not appear to be derived from intercepts--, but in a report that will make sense to the reader: these are the special skills of reports officers who work on the product of telephone taps. We can question an agent for details he may have overlooked in his reporting, or we may direct him to acquire additional information in order to fill in the gaps in previous reports. But telephone lines do not accept follow-up requirements. The closest we can come to requirements is to keep the monitors alert to our needs. There is much, however, that one can do to grasp the significance of what does come over the lines, in order to write accurate but meaningful reports for the readers. A first conversation on a new line would probably mean little to the best qualified reports officer, but a



series of conversations between the same correspondents begins to tell a story, each new conversation adding to what is already known and taking on meaning itself from previous ones. Like the monitors, the reports officers must reach the point where they feel that the target persons are old acquaintances. They need, in addition, like other good reports officers, an intimate knowledge of the local scene and of local personalities, and they must keep up to date on local events by extensive reading of the local press. Of the two reports officers who work on the product of ZRSCND and ZRJCINT, one has been on her present job four and one-half years, and the other over two years. Like the native monitors, they have developed the extra sense required by their jobs.

The relative productivity of the various lines of ZRJOINT, and to a lesser extent those of ZRSOLO, offers several targeting hints. The most productive line of ZRJOINT, as determined from an examination of one year's production, is that of the internationally known president of a labor confederation, a leader in local and regional Communist-front activities; the tap on his office phone produced almost one fifth of the operation's disseminated reports. The most prolific target installation was the Cuban embassy, whose three lines accounted for one-quarter of ZRJOINT's production. The two lines of the Cuban press service, on the other hand, were poor producers. There is an interesting combination of offices and home lines that shows an interesting production record. It consists of one line in the headquarters of an anti-CBYCKE, pro-Cuban organization that has extensive support in political and intellectual circles; two lines in the home of its guiding spirit, a former President of the country; one line in the home of the titular head of the organization; and one line in the home of a prominent intellectual who is very active in the organization's affairs. These five lines produced over 35% of ZRJOINT's disseminated reports. The composition of these reports *offers the best example* shows another aspect of the cumulative nature of telephone-tap reporting. When an event occurs or is due to occur in which the principal members of the organization are interested, it will be reported in fragments from different lines on the same or successive days, but the composite picture gives a fairly complete idea of what

is going on. The interrelationship of lines, therefore, helps to make up for the fragmentary nature of telephone-tap information. That is, provided the individual lines do produce the fragments; the lines of two other prominent members of the organization are tapped, but they have produced very little. Altogether the nine target lines mentioned above produced about 80% of ZRJOINT's disseminated reports. The five lines of the Soviet embassy accounted for 10% of the operation's production, and the other lines produced only a few scattered reports each. The production of the nine most productive lines was also noted for steadiness; there were peak months and relatively quiet months, but these lines produced continuously throughout the year. This continuity helps the monitors and reports officers to see the meaning of unfolding events, as we *already noted*; have *seen*, but it seems to run through the whole intelligence cycle, and our customers have often expressed the need for a continuing flow of information on a given target. ZRJOINT has been giving them this kind of information. The intelligence production of ZRSOLO, being much less, offers few opportunities for useful comparisons. The productivity of this operation in recent years has been characterized by general lulls, with occasional bursts of activity on some line or other. During the past year, the plans and actions of a Latin American exile who was trying to obtain control of the government of his country were the subject of 60% of ZRSOLO's disseminated reports. When the doings and movements of persons and groups heighten the interest we have in certain lines, the station's surveillance



teams and support agents often contribute additional or confirmatory information. The scouring of all the station's telephone-tap reports, despite occasional disguising, makes it clear to the initiated how each part of a report was obtained, so that it is a simple matter to review the production of ZEPHYRUS and ZEPHOL and to estimate the intelligence productivity of each line or group of lines, the probable advantages of tapping office lines or home lines, or the volume of production we can normally expect from targets of this or that nationality. Without this ability to trace the origin of the product, it is impossible for the station to base its targeting on anything more than mere hope, and in a wider sense it is impossible for KURARK as a whole to study patterns of productivity of similar targets in different areas and to estimate the probable productivity of projected operations.

There is one qualification which the Chief of Station expects in his reports officers, and in most of his case officers as well, and that is a good working knowledge of Spanish. The transmission of the Spanish-language tape from the ZR-0101 intercept center and the ERS-0101 listening posts is not delayed by translation, like the product of the Soviet, Czech, Yugoslav, and Polish lines, which stays one day with the various translators. Material in Spanish is not translated unless and until it is used in information or operational reports, or in the supply of name-check information to other agencies in the embassy. This eliminates the translation of items that will never be used; it also keeps in its original state, free from distortion or interpretation, the text of those items that will be used later. The station's officers prefer to have it this way: they have the assurance that their information has not been subject to misinterpretation by translators who, however expert and conscientious they may be, are not familiar with the background situations that give telephone conversations their true meaning. The possibility of not translating the Russian, Czech, Polish, and Serbian parts of the tapes cannot be avoided. But in order to reduce this possibility the translators are not allowed the discretion of the monitors at the intercept center; they are required to translate every word of the tape in those languages. And inasmuch as those three lines have considerable operational and CI/CE interest, an

ities that might appear trivial to a translator, such as one revealing no more than the fact of contact between a Czech diplomat and a local businessman, may turn out to have operational value.



Every morning the station's two Cuban case officers go over the transcripts from the Cuban lines of both operations; the SR case officer examines the transcripts and translations from the Soviet lines; and the EE case officer goes over the transcripts and translations from the Polish lines of ZPSOLO, the Yugoslav lines of ZRJOINT, and the Czech lines of both. The case officers look primarily for new operational leads, but they also do at this stage the sorting out of what will be retained and what will be thrown away. The SR case officer estimates that about 30% of the take is kept and goes into case files; the rest is thrown away. The main object of this collation of information, drawn from all sources and not only from the telephone taps, is to uncover means of access to target persons and indications of possible susceptibility to development and recruitment. The case files identify various acquaintances of each target person, the nature, frequency, and degree of intimacy of their relationship with him, and their general predispositions towards him and towards CRYOKE; in some instances the station is in touch with these acquaintances, and the telephone taps sometimes provide evidence of the truth or falsehood of what these middlemen tell us. The case files give us ideas of the target person's place in the embassy or legation, nationality, his relations with his superiors and colleagues,

and sometimes his personal weaknesses and problems. "Above all," remarks the SR officer, "the information derived from the telephone taps give<sup>s</sup> you a feel for the kind of man the target person is, although you have never met him." All information considered useful is shown to the Chief of Station before it goes into the case files, and he often returns it to the case officer concerned with his own comments or directions. In this way he keeps abreast every day of the details of operations and can give his case officers the benefit of his guidance at every step.

The telephone taps provide much of the station's CI/CE information, which is needed for the protection of the station's own operations and for the servicing of name-check requests from other ODVCE agencies in the embassy, especially ODACHD and ODENVY. In addition to spot information passed orally, the station transmits on the average 150 memoranda to ODACHD and 75 to ODENVY each year. Occasionally some of the information from ZRJOINT requires immediate action, and our men at the intercept center immediately passes the information to the station. Some of these urgent cases have involved PEPRIME citizens who got in touch with officials of hostile countries. One PEPRIME soldier of Chinese extraction tried to make his way to Communist China with the help of the Cuban embassy; his call was intercepted, the ODIPX and ODENVY representatives were notified, and he was returned to PEPRIME. Some of these cases require immediate surveillance of the suspects. The station is able to put mobile or foot surveillance on anyone at any time; the surveillers are efficient--and well paid--unlike the joint surveillance team which was organized when ZRJOINT came into being, and which had to be disbanded after one year. The station's competent surveillance teams were especially active during the past year in determining the real plans and actions of a Latin American exile, already mentioned, who was trying to take over the government of his country. He obviously suspected that he



was being watched and listened to, probably because of the harassment being directed at him at the time, he used deception on the phone, using a transposition code for the time and place of meetings which he discussed with his supporters. But the station's surveillance were able to keep track of his movements and action.

The reader will probably have remarked long ago, and quite properly, that such extensive telephone-tap coverage as 46 lines is not desirable for many stations. There is the question of the station's strength and of its ability to exploit effectively the mass of intelligence and operational information acquired from the taps. There is also the question of target availability; a large station would waste its strength if it extended its tap coverage--a common and natural urge--to targets of slight interest or productivity. The foregoing discussion of ZRSOLO and ZRJOINT has given intimations of the variety and importance of the targets. There are local Communist and Communist-front leaders who are trying to replace the present government by one hostile to CHYCKE. There are Latin American exiles who are plotting to overthrow the pro-CHYCKE governments of their own countries. There is the all-important Cuban target, which has turned out to be very productive. There are the PEPRIME Communist expatriates, a target of great interest to ODENVY. Finally, there are the representatives of the USSR and the European Satellites, who are working for the subversion of all Latin America, and not only the country where they are stationed. Thus, the station's 46 target lines are directed at a wide variety of local, regional and global KUBARK targets. The station is one of medium size. In addition to the Chief of Station and his deputy, there

44

*Two*  
are eleven case officers (including ~~these~~ KIWOLF officers), two reports officers, two intelligence analysts, and one photographer. The other members of the station give administrative or clerical support. The tap operations and the related surveillance and investigative projects require the full time of two case officers in the station. The product of the taps is examined in part each day by all the other station case officers, to whose operations it makes a substantial contribution. ZRSOLO and ZRJOINT, therefore, are not operations apart from the others, but are interwoven into most of the station's work.



The excellence of the station's two tap operations is reflected in their operational reporting. The progress of ZRJOINT for the past three and one-half years is succinctly told in monthly activities reports, begun in May 1960. These reports are dispatches of about three pages, arranged in the following sequence of eight headings: 1. the lines in operation during the month; 2. the outstanding <sup>intelligence</sup> items in the product; 3. significant follow-ups of leads; 4. liaison developments; 5. security; 6. technical <sup>matters</sup>; 7. personnel; 8. production, a list of the information reports sent by cable or dispatch to Headquarters. The same headings always appear, in the same order, so that there is little likelihood that an important matter has been overlooked. The regular reporting of ZRSOLO cannot be put into such a tidy package. It covers in great detail the two subjects that are of greatest importance in an independent operation intended primarily to produce CI/CE information and operational leads: first, the security problems, present or anticipated, and the measures planned or taken by the station; second, the follow-up of operational leads by station officers, and the use made of significant items of CI/CE information. This reporting of the operational progress of the two operations keeps the desk officers well informed on matters of detail and enables them to present an accurate account of these operations when required to do so by the approving authorities. And of course, these authorities are satisfied with the conduct and progress of ZRSOLO and ZRJOINT.

112

SECRET

## CONCLUSIONS

The many factors that enter into the success of a telephone-tap operation should be apparent from the foregoing account of ZRSOLO and ZRJOLIF. The main ones will be briefly noted below.

1. Experience. To extract a valuable intelligence product from the mass of talk requires special skills. The two most important are the skill of the monitors, who must separate the wheat from the chaff, and the skill of the reports officers who must put together fragmentary conversations into meaningful reports. The experience of individual key members of an operation depends on continuity on the job; a major turnover or too-rapid rotation is disastrous.

2. Staying on Top. The value of the product depends on quick handling and transmission, from monitors to case officers, to reports officers, to Headquarters. If there is a bottleneck anywhere, the whole process bogs down. Staying on top is essential; backlogs are fatal. It takes that extra ounce of effort to stay on top, but without it telephone-tap operations lose much of their value, and an already considerable effort is largely wasted.

3. Liaison. Joint tap operations based on a genuine community of operational interest have a chance of success. This community of interest can be gauged by the choice of target lines, by KUBARK's access to the premises (however restricted for valid operational reasons), and best of all by the nature and quality of the product.

Joint tap operation should not degenerate into a battle of

or both sides oblivious of the equity of the other

the upper hand.



4. Direction. Telephone taps depend for their productivity on the teamwork of several people; and for the effective use of their product, on the work of several others. There are many jobs involved, and it is not enough to do them all; it is necessary to do them all well. The teamwork of all the participants must be directed by one person and woven into the station's work as a whole. When telephone tap operations are sizable, like ZRSCLO and ZRJOINT, the active participation of the station chief or one of his principal subordinates is indispensable. When the operation is a joint one, it takes all the station chief's skill and prestige to establish KIBASK's equity in it at the start and to maintain it intact throughout the course of the operation.